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Golden Gate Audubon Society Newsletter
Volume 17 • No. 11 December 1995

The Gull

Life in the Burn Zone

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Give the gift of Audubon this season ... we have an array of birdy items at our office, ranging from calendars and books to feeders and seed. And we now have GGAS HATS -- be the first on your block to sport one. A gift membership to Audubon is the perfect introduction to the natural world for friends, neighbors and relatives (see the back page)..

A forest fire is an awesome thing, with miraculous capacity to destroy and create at the same time. The Mt. Vision fire at Point Reyes National Seashore destroyed homes and wildlife habitat, but left a laboratory for the study of survival and recovery. A bulletin from the Point Reyes Bird Observatory, one of 30 agencies comprising the Burn Area Emergency Rehabilitation (BAER) team which hopes to provide P.R.N.S. with a resources management plan to mitigate the effects of the fire, describes some initial impressions.

PRBO biologists were asked to assess damage to the bird populations in the burn zone and compare the results with their existing data of pre-burn conditions, compiled over the last 30 years at Palomarin research station, six miles from the southern tip of the burn zone. Biologists conducted area searches for birds at 15 different sites daily and evaluated the remaining habitat within the burn zone to determine how much foraging and nesting area still remains. There are plans to erect mist nets and band birds to track their relocation, adjustment, and survival following the loss of habitat.

Of immediate concern is competition for food and shelter among the birds who survived the fire, a struggle so great that it may preclude survival for many during the coming winter. On the other hand, the prognosis for long-term effects of the fire on bird life is good. Fire opens up areas that will benefit songbird habitat. Snags provide valuable nesting space and young plants will proliferate with the added sunshine and nutrients in the soil from decomposing logs, providing more needed food and nesting areas.

Preliminary findings indicate that most of the 30+ species of birds which inhabit

this area were able to fly to safe ground in unburned areas. It remains to be seen whether they will successfully invade new territories in areas which are already inhabited by other birds. Birds which were poor flyers, such as Wrentits and quail, suffered the most damage. California Quail, which normally travel in flocks, have been spotted wandering the charred hills alone. Wrentits, which normally travel alone, have been seen wandering in flocks. Fiercely territorial birds, such as Anna's Hummingbirds, also may have perished in the flames rather than leave their homes: none have been spotted in the areas being studied. PRBO will also monitor migrant birds returning to the national seashore for the winter, as records show that many of these birds return to the same location each year. These birds may have trouble adjusting, as well.

The area burned erratically, leaving some habitats intact and others heavily damaged. Some bird species which are normally solitary, are now flocking into remaining patches of willow and coastal scrub. The bird noise is abnormally high as each bird desperately competes for the remaining territories through song. Riparian, or streamside habitat, is by far the most necessary component for songbird survival, with the dense thickets of willow providing protection from larger predators such as owls and hawks as well as nesting areas in the spring.

Monitoring of bird activity in the burn zone began October 9 and hopefully will continue over the next several years in order to document the decline or increase of birds after a fire. With this kind of information, recommendations can be made for wildlife rehabilitation of post-burn sites.

GIFTS AND BEQUESTS

for GGAS

John Adams, M.D., Bebe J. Anderson, Ruth and John Anderson, Carla Bard, Bay Bridges District California Garden Club, Berkeley Garden Club, Len and Patti Blumen, Anna-Marie Bratton, Eleanor Briccetti, Ava Jean and Harold Brumbaum, William P., Byrnes, M.D., Chris Carpenter, Edward Chansky, Josiah Clark, Portland Coates, Kimball Cranney, Ethel L. Cross Trust, Edward Denebeim, Barbara and Barry Deutsch, David and Merleen Devine, Marion Gillen, Kenneth and Maxine Hagen, Steven Hayashi and Lillian Fujii, Gary Holloway, Rich and Terry Horrigan, Harold Kirker, Stuart Kremsky and Janet Rosen, Katharine and William Loughman, Meryle Malcheski and Lucietta Irwin, Mary Anne and Jean Mauro, Merrilyn McCuiston, Miles McKey, Mara Melandry, Jean Miller, Janet Morgan, Camille Mulligan and Karl Hans, Janet Murphy, Margaret Murphy, Hilda Marie Olson, Ann Parris, Jane Phillips, Marguerite and H. T. Richter, Marjorie Schwarz, Mary Sitton, Delia and John Taylor, Glen Tepke, Stephen and Inga Britt Thal, L. M. Tierney, Alma Tikker, Penelope Watson, Susan Watson

for the Bird Box

Ruth Doty, Hugh and Rosita Harvey

for the Bird Box in memory of Ruth Voss

Judith and Howard Hansell, Kathy Krohn and Harvey and Amster, Audry Lynch, Elenor Mulkey, Mary and John Wehausen, Anna Wilcox

for Audubon Adventures

Pat Gannon, U.C. Berkeley Faculty Birding Section, Peter Watkins

in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Brodsky

Joyce Unger

in memory of Phyllis Hannah (Roxie)

Gleason

Bruce Colman, Clark and Nancy Gleason, Citibank CitiSource Dept.

in memory of Elly Hugenberg

Bob and Dorothy O'Brien

in memory of Carlos Jordan

Harvey Amster and Kathy Krohn

in memory of Bertha Underhill

Georgia Becker, Friends of Aqu, Jeanne Howard

in memory of Tom Sibary
Rigolfi family

in memory of Anne Wilson
NASA-Ames Research Center

The Society welcomes gifts in general or gifts in honor of or in memory of relatives and friends. Such gifts will be used as specified by the donor, or if unspecified, at the discretion of GGAS Board of Directors. This includes their use for general GGAS activities or for special programs of the Society including Audubon Canyon Ranch of which GGAS is a sponsor. Please send your gift in the form of a check made out to Golden Gate Audubon Society, 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite G, Berkeley, CA 94702. All gifts are tax deductible. The Society is also appreciative of any bequests. Such bequests should specify as recipient the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. All gifts, donations and bequests will be acknowledged in The Gull as well as personally on behalf of the Society by the Secretary.

RUTH VOSS

Golden Gate Audubon was saddened to learn of the death of Ruth Voss, an active GGAS member and popular field-trip leader in the '60s, '70s and '80s. Born on a dairy farm just south of Sacramento and settling eventually in Berkeley, Ruth was widowed early and worked as a medical laboratory technician to support her family. Always a lover of the natural world, she made active use of her retirement years as a docent at both the Oakland Museum and the U.C. Botanical Gardens; as a field-trip leader for GGAS and for groups of friends and neighbors; and traveling to Africa and other far-flung places to watch birds and learn about other beautiful natural places. She is remembered by friends for the annual summer trips she organized to the Yosemite high-country camps.

We're grateful to Ruth's family for directing memorial contributions in her name to the Bird Box.

ETHEL CROSS BEQUEST

Golden Gate Audubon extends its thanks for a sizable bequest from the Ethel L. Cross Trust. Our continuing work in conservation and education is made possible by donations such as this and we remind members that we are happy to be remembered in the hereafter as well as in the here-and-now.



COUNTING TIME

'Tis the season ... for Christmas Bird Counts, that is. In both Oakland and San Francisco, we're well along in planning for our annual CBCs.

The Oakland Count is on Sunday, December 17. Extending from Point Isabel in the north to south of the Oakland Airport and from the Bay to Lafayette Reservoir, the Oakland count circle encompasses a variety of habitats that always produce a good number of species. Bird for the day with a group or be a feeder watcher in the comfort of your own home.

The San Francisco Count is on Wednesday, December 27. The circle covers the northern San Francisco Peninsula from San Bruno to the Golden Gate. Join a team in one of the areas for a full day of birding; help for a few hours by covering your neighborhood park or square; be a midday birder for a few hours in downtown San Francisco, or watch in your backyard for as little as 30 minutes. As always, the boat situation is uncertain, so if you can help with a boat please contact Alan Hopkins.

Both counts would welcome more participants, so if you're interested, but haven't yet signed up, contact the appropriate compiler(s) soon. Folks who let us know *early* are *very much appreciated* by the compilers! Neither count will be able to place counters at the last minute; cut-off for San Francisco is December 22. If you have sent in a form, but haven't received an assignment yet, you can expect to hear from us soon. We look forward to seeing you in the field.

Oakland Compiler:

Kay Loughman (510) 841-7428

San Francisco Compilers:

Dan Murphy (415) 564-0074

Alan Hopkins (415) 664-0983

WANTED: FIELD TRIP LEADER FOR S.F. CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

The San Francisco Christmas Bird Count is looking for a person to lead a half-day field trip on Wednesday, Dec. 27, the day of the San Francisco count. If you would like to help the SF CBC by leading an easy-paced trip in a nice area, please call Alan Hopkins at (415) 664-0983.

News from Our Ranch

Gala Evening Raises \$40,000

In a novel approach to fund-raising, the first ACR Gala, "Audubon Canyon Ranch .. Then and Now" was held on October 28. It featured a silent auction, raffle, dinner and dancing and raised \$40,000 for Ranch programs. Incredible donations of food, wine, travel, services, specialty items, art objects and getaways were contributed by docents, board members, Ranch guides, staff, businesses, and other generous individuals. Honored during the evening were four individuals, representative of the four facets of participation at ACR, for their leadership and vision. Spotlitged were:

Cliffort Conly (Benefactors)
Martin Griffin, Jr., M.D. (Founders)
Maurice "Skip" Schwartz (Staff)
Clerin "Zumie" Zumwalt (Volunteers)

The annual ACR fund-raising letter is in the mail. Your generosity will be greatly appreciated.

Dorothy Kidders Remembered

Word has been received of the death of Mrs. Randolph A. Kidders in Washington, D.C. Doty Kidder was a close friend of David Bouverie and a major contributor to the programs and the endowment of the Bouverie Preserve. Recently ACR honored her through the installation of a bronze plaque on "Doty's Path" to the newt pool on Stuart Creek. Doty Kidder's generous support and encouragement will continue to inspire all who walk Doty's Path and experience the joys of nature at the Bouverie Preserve.

New Volunteer Center at Bolinas

The Osher Volunteer Center at Picher Canyon is receiving its finishing touches. It features a gathering room, library, workroom, offices, storage, and AV center. Come spring, those who host at the Ranch will be able to enjoy the comforts of this Center.

A new septic system has been installed at Cypress Grove Preserve. Staff housing needs will be attended to in the near future.

Fall School Programs

The Fall hiking seasons at Bolinas Lagoon Preserve and Bouverie Preserve are completed. Almost 2,500 4th and 5th-grade children were led on hikes at the Preserves thanks to the dedication of over 100 docents.

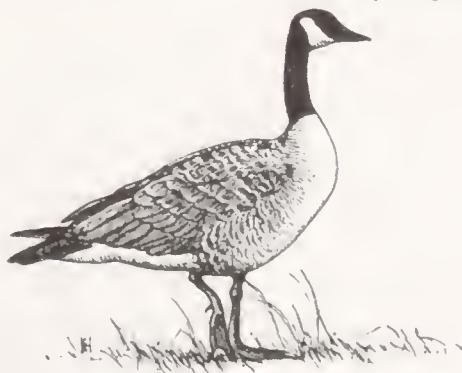
XCEL for Teenagers

This year, ACR initiated, in partnership with National Audubon Society, an innovative educational program called XCEL. Twenty young people successfully completed the 1995 summer phase of the XCEL program. They attended a residential camp for two weeks where they were trained in cross-cultural environmental leadership. They spent a week training in natural history with docents from BAP and BLP. Then, finally, they applied their accumulated knowledge to the 4th and 5th graders of the day-camp program. The docents who developed and supported the summer programs did an outstanding job and are to be highly commended. The XCELers are now in the second phase of the program which continues during the school year. This pilot program is primarily supported by a five-year grant from the Marin Community Foundation.

Adieu to Dan

It is with regret that we bid adieu to Dan Murphy, correspondent for "News from Our Ranch" to the sponsoring Bay Area Audubon chapters since 1988. Dan has accepted chairmanship of the ACR Property and Conservation Committee and feels the pinch of time in fulfilling all his commitments. Thank you, Dan. Your timely reports, broad vision, and jovial manner will be greatly missed.

Mary Engebret



NATIVE SPECIES NEWSLETTER

A new organization, complete with newsletter, the Native Species Network was formed in order to collect and distribute information about our unique and diverse, but steadily declining, heritage of native species. It will focus on the "pervasive, but often preventable, local impacts of our encroaching populations ... the crisis of habitat loss and extinction being fueled by rapidly expanding biological invasions of exotic species, and the special problems of preserving biodiversity within [the] battered, fragmented 'islands' of remaining habitat.

To get a copy of the newsletter and learn more about this organization, write to: Native Species Network, P.O. Box 405, Bodega Bay, CA 94923

OF MARSH AND MUD

Ohlone Audubon has published a 48-page shoreline guide, *Of Marsh and Mud*, which describes 8 plants, 12 birds, 9 mammals, 10 fish, 9 larger arthropods and 10 mollusks found in the salt marsh and mudflat environment. Written by Dave Riensche, a naturalist at Coyote Hills Regional Park, and illustrated by Kevin Mcek, this field-guide sized paperback can be ordered from: Ohlone Audubon, 1608 Walden Court, Fremont, CA 94539 for \$10 per copy, including shipping and handling.

RICHARDSON BAY AUDUBON CENTER

Two December Sundays at Richardson Bay will focus on family activities:

Sunday, December 3, 2:00 p.m.

Tidepool Theatre -- learn about the creatures that inhabit the Bay, then search for them along the shoreline.

Sunday, December 10, 2:00 p.m.

Holiday Animal Crafts -- celebrate the holiday season by making ornaments, cards and other animal crafts. Hot drinks and other refreshments.

1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Victorian Tea at Lyford House

Call (415) 388-2524 for further information.

Observations: September 8 - November 2

Hugh Cotter

Fall is always an exciting time and this year was no exception. With highlights including two potential new additions to the state list and many extraordinary vagrants, Fall 1995 will certainly go down as one of those to remember.

LOONS TO DUCKS

Black-footed Albatross numbers decreased from those recorded in August with a high of fifty-nine reported on a Cordell Bank trip on Oct. 14. Two Laysan Albatross were also reported during the period: one seen on a Monterey Bay trip on Oct. 1 (ADeM), and another on a trip to the Davidson Seamount on Oct. 30 (ADeM). The trip to the Davidson Seamount also recorded three unidentified *Pteradroma* sp. petrels (ADeM), two of which were believed to be "Cookalarias" petrels [Cook's, Stejneger's, Pycroft's, Gould's]. Northern Fulmar numbers remained high offshore. A **Streaked Shearwater**, observed on Monterey Bay on Sept. 9 (TEa), brings the tally for this extreme rarity in Californian waters to about seven occurrences. This species is most likely to be found off the east coast of Asia, south to the equator. Flesh-footed Shearwaters continued to be recorded throughout the period with up to six birds being seen on two occasions on Monterey Bay, Sept. 30 and Oct. 28 (ADeM). A **Greater Shearwater** recorded 13 miles SSW of Southeast Farallon Island (MM, m.ob.), will become, if accepted, only the third California record for this species which is more commonly found in the Atlantic Ocean.

While it has been a good year for Buller's Shearwaters offshore, with large concentrations being recorded, numbers of Short-tailed and Black-vented Shearwaters remained low, with only small scattered groups being reported. **Manx Shearwater** sightings continued on from August with reports on five occasions, including singles on Sept. 9 (DLSh) and Sept. 10 (TEa), two on Sept. 17 (ADeM), and another on Oct. 29 (ADeM) on

Monterey Bay. In addition, another was recorded 1/2 mile south of SEFI on Oct. 15 (PP).

Counts of Wilson's Storm-petrel peaked with a high of 25 on Sept. 16 on a Cordell Bank trip (RS), while Fork-tailed Storm-petrel numbers peaked during the period at 120 on the same trip. Leach's Storm-petrels were recorded on two occasions with a high of 26 seen on a Davidson Seamount trip on Oct. 30 (ADeM), while Least Storm-petrels were reported on five separate occasions from Monterey and the Cordell Bank. Always a crowd pleaser, a **Red-tailed Tropicbird** (DLSh) was well seen on a Monterey trip on Sept. 16, some 46 miles WSW of Rocky Point, while an adult **Brown Booby** was reported on Sept. 27 from SEFI (fide KH).

Unusual duck sighting included a **Garganey** at Table Bluff, HUM, (JCS/GjH) from Sept. 16 through 23, while five separate Harlequin Ducks were recorded through the period in Monterey, Contra Costa and Humboldt counties. The Oldsquaws at Princeton Harbor, SM, continued to be reported through the end of September, while reports of Hooded Merganser and Eurasian Wigeon began building up in October.

RAPTORS TO ALCIDS

Highlights of the hawk migration this year included a Goshawk, a good record for the coast, seen at "Hawk Hill," MRN, on Oct. 10, and a total of fifteen reported Broad-winged Hawks.

A total of 10 American Golden Plovers and 16 Pacific Golden Plovers were found along the coast during this period. A **Bar-tailed Godwit** was seen by many during its stay at Abbott's Lagoon, PRNS, MRN, from Oct. 2 through Oct. 21 (RH, SMI, m.ob.). The adult **Little Stint** at Pine Gulch Creek remained through Sept. 7 (TEa), while another member of the stint family, a **Long-toed Stint**, was observed at Limantour, PRNS, on Oct. 9 (RS), making only the second California occurrence of this species. Unfortunately, no public access was available to view this

bird at the time, as Limantour was closed due to the fire at Point Reyes N.S.

Other unusual waders included: one Solitary Sandpiper, seven Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, six Stilt Sandpipers, four Buff-breasted Sandpipers, and six Ruff, recorded from Yolo to Monterey counties (m.ob.).

An immature Franklin's Gull first seen on Sept. 16 (MMR) remained throughout the period at the Sunnyvale Sewer ponds, SCL, while an adult **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was seen at the waterbird pond at the Coyote Creek Riparian Station, Alviso, SCL, on Oct. 22 by one lucky observer (NLe). Unfortunately, a subsequent search by others could not relocate the bird. This is the second Northern California record for this species, following the first way back in 1978, in Monterey county.

Up to 4 Black Skimmers continued to be seen at Mountain View and other parts of the Bay throughout the period. Always a good rarity in California, a **Thick-billed Murre** was seen and photographed on a Monterey Bay trip on Oct. 16, one mile off Cypress Point (ADeM).

DOVES TO VIREOS

White-winged Doves proved to be scarce during the period, with only one reported on Oct. 7 at the Big Sur River mouth, MTY, (SRo). There were two reports of Chimney Swift: one from SEFI, Sept. 8 (fide KH), and another seen on Sept. 11 (SBT) at the Alviso Marina, SCL. Totals of Least Flycatchers and Tropical Kingbirds were eight and fourteen, respectively, while an Eastern Phoebe at Owl Canyon, Bodega Bay, SON, on Oct. 28 (BDP) remains. Two separate Cassin's Kingbirds were recorded in Monterey Co., while three Eastern Kingbirds were seen along the coast in September.

Two unusual warbler sightings and some of the main highlights of the fall came in September, and surely caused a few skipped heartbeats. Firstly, a **Lanceolated Warbler** was seen and subsequently banded and photographed

on SEFI on Sept. 11 (fide PP). This is the first California occurrence of this "Asiatic skulker" and one of only a handful of records in North America. As if that weren't enough, an **Arctic Warbler** was banded and photographed at the Big Sur Ornithology Lab, MTY, on Sept. 13 (DR). This will be the first state record of this species and indeed only the second record south of Alaska. Typical of this fall season, however, the bird did not stay around to be seen by other observers.

A **Northern Wheatear** was discovered at Baker Beach in San Francisco on Sept. 23 (DSg). This bird remained only the one day, but allowed many to come enjoy the sight. Another one was subsequently reported from Bodega Bay, SON, on Sept. 26 (LS, SS). These are only the 8th and 9th records for this species in California. A **Yellow Wagtail** was reported at Ocean Ranch, HUM, on Sept. 18 (RH). Incredibly, this was the second record this fall for this extremely rare species in California. A total of fourteen Red-throated Pipits were reported from various coastal locations (m.ob.).

Rarer members of the Vireo family were represented by a **Yellow-throated Vireo** at Pine Gulch Creek, Bolinas, MRN, on Sept. 16 (DDeS); three **Philadelphia Vireos** along the coast; and two **Yellow-green Vireos**: one at Lake Merced, SF, from Oct. 15 through Oct. 28 (DPM, HF, JM) and another at Sunset State Beach, SCZ, on Oct. 17 (RMrr). In addition, 12 Red-eyed Vireos were reported from various locations (m.ob.) throughout the period.

WARBLERS TO ORIOLES

Warblers seemed to everywhere this year with totals including: twenty-six Tennessee Warblers (18 in Sept., 8 in Oct.); seven Virginia's Warblers (5,2); seven Northern Parulas (6,1); eighteen Chestnut-sided Warblers (15,3); eighteen Magnolia Warblers (11,7); three Cape May Warblers (2,1); eleven Black-throated Blue Warblers (4,7); seven Blackburnian Warblers (2,5); eight Prairie Warblers (5,3); and numerous Palm and Blackpoll warblers. There were two records of Bay-breasted Warbler: one at SEFI on Sept. 11 (fide KH), and another at Half Moon Bay, SM, on Oct. 14 (RSTh). An immature male **Cerulean**

Warbler seen and banded at the Big Sur River mouth, MTY, on Oct. 4 (JBo, DR, SRO) was an exciting find, this being the first seen in Northern California since 1981 and one of very few state records.

Black-and-white Warblers and American Redstarts proved numerous during the period while two Prothonotary Warblers were recorded: an adult male at Princeton Airport, SM, on Sept. 23 (DPo, PJM, DKe) and another at the Big Sur River, MTY, on Oct. 2 (JBo, SRO). A **Worm-eating Warbler** was found at Owl Canyon, Bodega Bay, SON, on Sept. 15 (DN, BDP/RAR). Six Ovenbirds (5,1) and twenty-six Northern Waterthrushes were recorded while two **Connecticut Warblers** were on S.E. Farallon during the last week of Sept. (KH). The only record of **Mourning Warbler** came from Nunes Ranch at Point Reyes on Sept. 10 (JDi). Last but not least, a total of six Canada Warblers (3,3) were reported during the period, a good number.

A Summer Tanager was reported at Point Reyes N.S. Oct. 3 (RH) while good numbers of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks continued to be seen along the coast (m.ob.); in addition, there were two reports of Indigo Bunting.

Unusual sparrows included numerous reports of Clay-colored Sparrows. On SEFI, a **Cassin's Sparrow** was seen on Oct. 20 (PP), while two individual **LeContes Sparrows** were seen there, one Sept. 11 and another Sept 27 (fide KH). Harris's Sparrows were seen on two occasions at PRNS: one on Sept 28 (MP) and another on Oct. 14 (TEa), the latter remaining until Oct. 19.

One of the many highlights of the fall must surely have been the fact that all four longspur species were seen. On one occasion, all four could even be seen together at Point Reyes N.S. McCown's Longspurs were seen on two occasions: one at the Hall Ranch, PRNS, from Oct. 15-21 (CCo) and another at the North Beach turnoff on Oct. 25 (RS). The latter bird was also seen in the company of California's third record of **Smith's Longspur**, a first year male. This bird was first seen on Oct. 24 and continued to be seen by many there through Oct. 30 (TEa, JMR). Lapland Longspurs were numerous, including one flock of up to fifteen birds at PRNS. Chestnut-collared

Longspurs were also very much in evidence at PRNS throughout October with up to seven birds being seen. The only other report of the species away from PRNS was a single individual seen Oct. 29 on Old Davis Road, SOL (TEa). A **Snow Bunting** was also at Point Reyes N.S. from Oct. 22 through at least Oct. 30 (BMeK, WEH). Numerous Bobolinks and six Orchard Orioles were reported from various locations along the coast while a Rusty Blackbird was seen at the Woodland Sugar ponds, YOL, on Oct. 10 (TDM fide AW).

The monthly observation column is generated from reports made to the Northern California Bird Box or to the author. Some sightings are unconfirmed and numbers of birds are often best regarded as estimates or "best guesses". In general, birds in boldface are very rare in our region, geographically or seasonally. Many of these are currently reviewed by the California Bird Records Committee (CBRC). Observers are encouraged to provide written and/or photographic documentation to the CBRC, c/o Michael Patten, P.O. Box 51959, Riverside, CA 92517-2959 for any species currently on the review list. A list of review species can also be obtained from the CBRC secretary at the address above.

OBSERVERS: Jane Adams, Florence G. Bennett, Erica Berman, Andrew Birch, James Booker, Bob Brandriff, Tony Briggs, Ken Burton, Les Chibana, Josiah Clark, Suzanne Cogan, John Comstock, Chris Corben, Hugh Cotter, J. Scott Cox, James Danzenbaker, Phil Davis, Gary Deghi, Al DeMartini, David DeSante, Jack Dineen, Todd Easterla, Alan M. Eisner, Mike Feighner, George Finger, Kathy Francone, Harold Fuller, Gene Gerlach, Steve Glover, Edward G. Greaves, Steve Hampton, Keith Hansen (KH), W. Edward Harper, Gjon Hazard, Mike Healy, Mike Heffernon, Kevin Hints, Bob Hirt, David Hoffman, David Holway, Alan S. Hopkins, Richard Hoyer, Lisa Hug, Joan Humphrey, Al Jeramillo, Dan J. Keller, Norma Knave, Bill Krinz, Peter LaTourette, Rosalie Lefkowitz, Brian Lentz, Nick Lethaby, Bob Lewis, Cindy Lieurance, Leslie Lieurance, Jim Lomax, John Luther, Michael J. Mammoser, Timothy D. Manolis, John Mariani, Sean McAllister, Guy McCaskie, Mac McCormick, John McKean, Bert McKee, Dave McKenzie, Kevin McKerrigan, Robert Merrill, Peter J. Metropolis, Steve Metzger, Carol Miller, Steve Mlodinow, Mike Moran (MM), Joseph Morlan, Dan P. Murphy, Dan Nelson, Benjamin D. Parmeter, Michael Perrone, Marjorie Plant, John Poole, David Powell, Peter Pyle, Bob Reiling, Jean M. Richmond, Robert J. Richmond, Don Roberson, Mike M. Rogers, Steve Rottenborn, Steve Rovell (SRO), Ruth A.

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Field Trips Calendar

Saturday, December 2

Monterey Bay and Coastal Areas

Meet at 9 a.m. in Monterey at the foot of the Coast Guard Pier. (Bring quarters for parking.) We will bird this area, then drive north, stopping at various spots including Moss Landing. We will be looking for loons, grebes, gulls, alcids, and rocky coastline species. Beginners welcome. Bring lunch and a scope if you have one. Leader: Don Starks (408) 266-2969, (eve.) (*)

Saturday and Sunday, December 2-3

Gray Lodge and Sacramento Wildlife Refuges

For this two-day trip, meet on Saturday at 9 a.m. in parking lot #14 at Gray Lodge.

Drive east on I-80 15 miles beyond Davis to Route 99 exit. Go north 52 miles on Route 99 to the town of Gridley. Turn left (west) on Colusa Hwy. and continue five miles to Pennington Road. Turn left and follow signs to Gray Lodge Wildlife Management Area. Proceed through the checking station (entrance fee), and continue to parking lot #14.

We will caravan through the Gray Lodge Wildlife Management Area on Saturday, and through the Sacramento Wildlife Refuge on Sunday.

On Sunday we will meet at 9 a.m. in the visitors' parking lot at the Sacramento Wildlife Refuge. To get there from I-5, take the Norman Rd. exit just north of the Glenn Co. line and follow signs to the refuge.

Allow two-and-a-half hours driving time from the Bay Area. (AAA map of Sacramento Valley Region is helpful.) For accommodations, the Blue Gum Willows Motel off I-5 at Willows (916) 934-5401 is suggested. (There is no lodge at Gray Lodge.) Camping is possible at the State Park in Colusa. Bring lunch, scopes, and clothes appropriate for the valley in December (chilly). Heavy rain cancels trip. Leaders: Steve and Rene Margolin. (510) 654-6295 \$ (*)

Saturday, December 9

Hayward Regional Shoreline

Meet at 9 a.m. in the parking lot at the Interpretive Center on Breakwater Ave. for a half day of birding. From I-880 in the East Bay take the Jackson St. exit west toward the San Mateo Bridge, then take Clawiter exit. Continue across Clawiter and take an immediate left onto Breakwater. Continue on Breakwater to the Interpretive Center. From the West Bay, cross the San Mateo Bridge and take the Eden Landing exit, then left back across the freeway and left again on Breakwater.

We should see a variety of waterfowl and shorebirds. There are also grassland species to be seen. Bring a scope if you have one. Rain cancels. Leader: Rusty Scalf (510) 523-7108. (*)

Sunday, December 10

Arrowhead Marsh/San Leandro Creek

Meet at 9 a.m. for this half-day trip. Take Hwy. 880 to the Hegenberger Rd. exit. Drive west about one-half mile toward the

Oakland Airport. Pass Leet Dr. and meet in the small parking lot on the right just beyond the creek. We will be looking for waterfowl and shorebirds.

Beginners and children are especially welcome. They will provide other birders an opportunity to share their knowledge. Rain cancels. Leader: Jeffrey Black (510) 526-7068

Wednesday, December 13

Mini-trip to Lake Merritt, Oakland

Meet at the Rotary Science Center at 9:30 a.m. Go east on Grand Ave., cross Harrison St. and turn right on Bellevue Ave. to Lake Merritt. Continue to the Rotary Science Center on the right, just beyond the duck pond. This is a good opportunity to review waterfowl. Lunch optional. Rain cancels trip. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510) 351-9301 and Jean-Marie Spoelman.

Sunday, December 17

Oakland Christmas Bird Count

See page

Wednesday, December 27

San Francisco Christmas Bird Count

See page

Saturday, January 6

Palo Alto Baylands

Meet at 8 a.m. Take Hwy. 101 south to Palo Alto; exit at Embarcadero and drive east toward the airport and Baylands Nature Center. Continue beyond the airport to the duck pond (on the left) and park at the east end. Bring lunch, scopes and clothes appropriate for rain and mud. We should see waterfowl, rails and shorebirds. Trip will end in mid-afternoon. Leader: Dan Murphy (415) 564-0074 (*)

Wednesday, January 10

Mini-trip to Arrowhead Marsh

Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the marsh. Take Hwy. 880 (Nimitz) to the Hegenberger Rd./Oakland Airport exit. Drive west to Doolittle Drive and turn right. Go a short distance and turn right again onto Swan Way. Turn left after about a block and follow the sign to the marsh (Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline). Park in the second parking lot on the left. We will look for Burrowing Owls, shorebirds and waterfowl. Rain cancels trip. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510) 351-9301 and Jean Marie Spoelman.

Saturday, January 20

Delta Area: Lodi, Woodbridge Rd., and Staten Island

Meet at 8:30 a.m. in the parking lot of Rocky's Restaurant at the intersection of I-5 and State Hwy. 12. From the Bay Area, take Hwy. 580 to Hwy. 205 and continue east beyond Tracy to I-5. Go north on I-5 about 14 miles beyond Stockton to the intersection of Hwy. 12. (From the North Bay, an alternate route would be to take Hwy. 12 out of Fairfield and Rio Vista to the intersection of I-5.)

continued on page 91

The flight to Bali takes about 23 hours in the air; adding waiting times in airports and it becomes a marathon. As humans, we were lucky to be able to stop along the way, breaking up the long journey with overnights in Hawaii and Singapore. Imagine a migrating bird making such a long flight -- and some species DO -- and you gain a new appreciation of the enormous energy entailed. No wonder some birds stray or stop over in unorthodox spots to rest and eat to gather energy to continue.

Bali is a little slice of Paradise-on-earth. It is lush, everything a color of green that almost hurts your eyes, peopled with genuinely kind humans, rather ugly dogs and millions of roosters (cock fighting is a big sport, unfortunately). The cocks are secured by placing attractive open-weave baskets around them, then placed by the road so that they may be amused by the constant parade passing by. Everything in Bali is cause for celebration; even cremation ceremonies become entertainment for villages. Not only are the Balinese beautiful people, but they are great fun to be around.

My long-suffering husband agreed to leave our gorgeous hotel surroundings for a bird-watching morning in Ubud. Another adventure in foreign surroundings! The local chapter of Bali birders was enthusiastic, cheerful, and very young -- no one seemed over the age of 20. They were obviously enamored of a character, Victor Mason, British I believe, who began leading groups of tourists as well as educating the locals to appreciate their unique birds. Unfortunately he was out of town, so our leader was one of his accolytes, a chubby, cheerful young girl who had a charming accent, a real challenge to our interpretive skills. We met at a local pub-restaurant called the Beggar's Bush Pub where the bird club has a small office. We hauled ourselves up many flights of stairs until we were on a roof garden overlooking a deep canyon. There was a group of us: 6 Americans and 4 German or Dutch folks along with the 2 girls and 2 guys who were our guides. They gave us a list of the birds we

were most apt to see on our walk. What a kick it was! We learned a lot more than strictly bird stuff as we passed through neighborhoods, saw a parade of young people representing nations in the U.N. accompanied by the beautiful Balinese music we had become accustomed to hearing, and walked the equivalent of a tightrope -- the dikes between rice fields were as slick as black ice and the thought of falling off them was distinctly unappealing, if not hazardous to our health. Our first birds were White-bellied Swifts, spotted first from the roof garden and seen many places later. The Java Kingfisher was a beauty similar to the colorful ones I'd seen in Africa. We saw a nice mix of 25 bird species, some quite spectacular. They ranged from herons, swallows, shrike, bulbul, sunbirds (the equivalent of our hummingbirds), and doves to the Scarlet-headed Flowerpecker, Ashy Tailorbird (in the weaverbird family, I think), Bar-winged Prinia and Pied Bushchat. A most common bird, the Cattle Egret, became memorable as a huge flock of them wheeled against black rain clouds touched with silver linings. They literally shimmered as they disappeared from sight only to reappear as white waves against the black clouds.

As we teetered along the dikes, the girls chatted with the farmers who jokingly asked them to help weed the rice fields. As they weed the fields, they collect the dragonfly larvae (you have to get protein where you find it!), which are considered a delicacy. Our leader told us her grandfather is 100 years old and he attributes his longevity to having eaten nothing but natural foods all of his life -- no foods out of cans, nor even a burger. He still has all his teeth, but is badly in need of an eye lift. We also learned about some of the Balinese wildflowers and wild herbs, some used to cure "Bali Belly." Since they use the rice fields as their sewer system, even Balinese have occasional bouts of B.B.

We returned to Beggar's Bush Pub for a cool beer and lunch. We had been lucky that there was a cloud cover, but it was hot and humid nevertheless. We may not have

seen hundreds of birds or even that many species, but I thought it was a great way to get closer to the real land and the backbone of Bali, the rice fields. Even Dick admits that birding often gives you a unique perspective of a country, plus lets you meet interesting people with a bond more common than any spoken language. Bali Hai!

Observations, continued from page 89

Rudesill, Paul Sarassini, Barry Sauppe, Rusty Scalf, Doug Shaw, Debra L. Shearwater, David Shuford, Daniel Singer (DSg), Lloyd Spitalnick, Sandy Spitalnick, Judy Spitzer, Craig Spriggs, Rich Stallcup (RS), John Sterling (JCS), Tim Stewart, Gary Strachan, David L. Suddjian, Scott B. Terrill, Ronald S. Thorn, Dorothy Tobkin, Chris Traub, John Westlake, Nick Whelan, Jerry White, Alan Wight, Adam Winer.

Data thanks to Joe Morlan and the Northern California Bird Box.

Abbreviations for counties: ALA, Alameda; CC, Contra Costa; MRN, Marin; MEN, Mendocino; MTY, Monterey; SF, San Francisco; SM, San Mateo; SCL, Santa Clara; SON, Sonoma; YOL, Yolo

Field Trip Calendar, continued from p. 90

We will caravan to the Lodi sewage ponds looking for rare shorebirds and gulls and then to Staten Island for Sandhill Cranes and waterfowl, including Tundra Swans and Snow Geese. Dress warmly and be prepared for rain. Bring lunch and liquids. Leader: David Yee, (209) 951-1526. (*)

Noteworthy: David Yee, who has led this trip for GGAS for the past eleven years, has been a Regional Editor for *American Birds/Audubon Field Notes* for the last eight years.

Trips marked with \$ go to parks and other sights that require an entrance fee.

Carpooling arrangements will be attempted for trips marked (*). See below.

Problems: If you need a ride or can take a passenger, or if you need information and have difficulty reaching a field trip leader, call Russ Wilson, Field Trips Committee Chair, (510) 524-2399.

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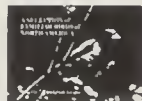
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Northern California Bird Box (510) 524-5592 Weekly Rare Bird Summary

5 species of loon have been seen in California

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